

Modern Slavery

In the book, "Slave: my story" Author Mende Nazer lost her childhood one horrific night in 1993. Arab raiders swept through her Nuba village on horseback, murdering the adults by slitting their necks with knives and rounding up 31 young children. Mende was 12. A slave trader brought an end to Sudan's capital city and sold her to a wealthy Arab family. Her owners called her 'yebit' or 'black slave'. She was subjected to appalling sexual, physical and mental abuse. She slept in a shed and ate the family leftovers like a dog. Normally her story would have never come to light but seven years after she was seized and sold into slavery she made a dramatic break for freedom. Her book 'Slave' my story recounts a secret modern-day trade in slaves.

The first anti-slavery movement began in 1787, slavery was perfectly legal and was a stable and pervasive part of most societies for thousands of years... Those who have been enslaved share many of the psychological sequelae of those subjected to sexual violence. Like a victim of rape the former slave often feels shame... the stigma of enslavement, the products of long term denigration, and abuse by slaveholders press upon the mind and emotions of freed slaves and stifle their voices.

As far back as humanity goes, people have bought, sold, and enslaved other people.

But one of the great triumphs of our world has been our ability to end such evil practices. People rose up against slavery and didn't mince words. "Abolition" leaves no room for compromise.

Emancipation set the slaves free.

That's what we like to think anyway. Yeah, we've heard there are still questionable work conditions. Sweatshops and the like. But buying, selling, and trafficking human beings? If that's happening, it must just be in wildly different cultures, far from my influence.

Actually, no. That smartphone. That t-shirt, computer, a cup of coffee...

That's stuff we buy, and that's stuff that comes from slaves.

"But they're reputable brands! If they were running sweatshops, Oprah would be all over it."

True, but it's not that simple. The fact of the matter is, these reputable brands that we know and love, they just don't know where all the materials come from - at least they may claim.

What about the cotton in that t-shirt? The tantalum in that smartphone? The beans in that cup of joe?

That's where you find the slaves. In the fields, in the mines. In the processing of the raw materials.

It's the supply chain. And it's a supply chain that enslaves more people than at any time in human history. They're working for you.

So much for abolition.

That's why I would like to help you understand your influence on slavery. Not so you can feel bad. Not so you'll stop buying stuff...

... so you will ask the brands you like to find out where their materials are coming from. It is not hard for them. A free market should come from free people. Find out how many slaves work for you at slaveryfootprint.org

Together, we'll work toward a world where everything you buy could have a new kind of "Made in..." tag:

MADE IN A FREE WORLD

Did you know:

The annual revenues of some corporations are so colossal that they dwarf the economies of many countries across the globe. However, the world's most profitable and successful businesses do not always have stellar reputations.

WALMART

US retailer Walmart, with revenue of \$486 billion in 2017, out-earned the sixth-

largest economy in the eurozone – Belgium (with a GDP of \$468 billion). If it were a country, Walmart would be ranked 24th in the world by GDP.

Colombia. Volkswagen would be number 43 in the world if its revenue represented its GDP.

APPLE

US technology giant Apple would be 47th in the world by GDP if it were a country. The company, which has been accused of mistreating and underpaying their employees, hiding money offshore, and not paying taxes, earned \$229 billion last year. In comparison, Portugal's GDP in 2016 was \$205 billion.

AMAZON

Online retailer Amazon, which is close to surpassing Apple as the world's most valuable company, earned almost \$118 billion in 2017. Its revenue exceeded the GDP of Kuwait (\$111 billion). Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has recently become the richest man in modern history, with his wealth topping \$150 billion this month.

Experts say globalization is largely responsible for companies being able to grow to such sizes. However, bigger does not always mean better. Many multinational corporations, including those from the list above, have generated negative headlines and are among the most hated.⁵

Keep in mind these country-sized companies "don't know" where their ingredients come from - and neither do you.

In 2018, The Department of labor recently released a document with 149 risky goods in our modern economy that may be slave labored by children, depending on where they come from -

or download COMPLY CHAIN application (referred to from PDF)

Child and forced labor goods:

alcoholic beverages, artificial flowers, baked goods, bamboo, bananas, green/soy and yellow beans, beef, tobacco, bricks, carpets, cashews, tin, ceramics, chile peppers, citrus fruits, cloves, coal, cocoa, coffee, corn, cotton, cucumbers, cumin, diamonds, fish, eggplants, an assortment of electronics, emeralds, fireworks, poppies, footwear, furniture, steel, garlic,

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garments, gold, grapes, gravel, hazelnuts, iron, leather, lobsters, locks, matches, meat, melons, nails, palm oil, olives, onions, palm thatch, peanuts, pineapples, pornography, rice, rubber, salt, sand, shellfish, shrimp, silk fabric, soap, sugarcane, surgical instruments, tea, timber, vanilla, wheat, potatoes, carrots and more... and the list goes on... (I made a quick decision during a speech to cut out these products to save on time and not lose interest, but regrettably so, for people should know all the potential products)

So what can we do??

Slavery Footprint.Org suggests asking manufacturers where their 'ingredients' come from. I suggest buying as many local products as possible and involving City commission to provide jobs for citizens as inspectors so that our City isn't "accidentally" supporting modern slavery and other human rights abuses.

Bibliography

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Ashton Kutcher Speech on Human Trafficking Before Congress

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<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ashtonkutchercongressthorn.htm>

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